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CHILE

During the European Parliament's plenary sitting on 17 October, Mr. Alfred BERTRAND commented on the motion for a resolution submitted by Mr LUCKER and four other group chairmen on the military coup d'etat in Chile.

He stressed a number of points, contained in the joint motion tabled by the political groups, which appear to be particularly important. Firstly, the friendly relations with the Latin-American Parliament in which the Chilean Parliament has a number of representatives who are unfortunately being prevented from discharging their duties by the military junta.

Secondly, the complete disregard of human rights and constitutional liberties by the authorities now in power. In a spirit of solidarity with all who are openly or in secret struggling for the restoration of constitutional democracy, the political groups of the European Parliament call for an immediate end to oppression by the military regime and the early re-establishment of fundamental liberties for the people of Chile.

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In addition to this official position of the CD group in the European Parliament, we have received statements from other political groups and associations with Christian-Democratic leanings. These are reported below.

Democrazia Cristiana Italiana. The political secretary of the Italian Christian-Democratic party, Mr. Fanfani, made the following statement: 'Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to the Chilean people on the death of President Allende whose faith in democracy we all admired and for which he sacrificed his own life. It is with a deep sense of fraternal concern that we are following events in Chile and the fate of the Chilean people, the victims of an unsuccessful agreement between democratic forces and of acts which weakened the institutions and jeopardized safety and liberty. We condemn once more the use of political violence under the specious pretext of restoring order. The Christian-Democratic party hopes that Chile and the whole world will be able to learn from this bitter experience and strengthen their own desire for liberty and to show the people where their real interests lie'.

The National Council of the Belgian Christian-Democratic Youth Movement
(CVP, Flemish Wing)

A press release issued by the CD Youth Movement reads as follows:
'The National Council expresses its solidarity with the progressive forces in Chile in their struggle against the reactionary activities of the privileged classes, backed by national capitalism. The National Council calls on the CVP to act through the European Christian-Democratic Union and to make every attempt to bring pressure to bear on the Chilean Christian-Democratic party to come out in clear support of the resistance movement against the military junta'.

World Union of Christian Democrats

The Secretary-General of the WUCD reaffirms the Union's condemnation of the military coup d'etat which has suppressed liberty and every constitutional safeguard in Chile. He also expressed his own deep regret at the tragic death of President Salvador Allende and his sympathy for all the victims of the violence which has thrown the country into confusion.

The Christian-Democratic parties of Latin-America

The Christian-Democratic parties of Latin-America, meeting in Caracas, called on the regime which had seized power in Chile to respect human rights and to refrain from ideological or political persecution.

At the same time, the democratic parties of Latin-America expressed their strong and fraternal solidarity with the Christian-Democratic party in Chile, in the certainty that, true to its popular, democratic and republican traditions, it would continue to fight for democratic institutions and for the continuation of the cultural transformation and national liberation begun by the Christian-Democratic government between 1964 and 1970.

Spain's representatives on the UEDC

The Spanish representatives on the UEDC issued a statement stressing that, faced with the tragic events in Chile, they severely condemned the overthrow of the Chilean Government by the armed forces whose right to resolve political controversies against all legally recognized democratic principles they did not recognize, that they refused to take any action implying support for or cooperation with the situation created by the coup d'etat and that they had the deepest respect for the person of President Allende who had paid with his own life his attachment to democratic principles.

The Catalan Christian-Democratic Union

The Catalan Christian-Democratic Union condemned in the strongest possible terms the military coup d'etat which overthrew President Allende none of whose actions, not even those tainted with unconstitutionality, could justify illegal armed intervention. The union deplored the behaviour of certain democratic political groups, both on the government and opposition side, who by adopting an uncompromising attitude, rendered all dialogue impossible, thus contributing to the overthrow of democracy; it expressed its complete disagreement with the statements made by a number of CD leaders approving the military junta. The union endorsed the statements made by politicians not only in Christian-Democratic parties but also from other political parties in various countries, condemning the coup d'etat. It endorsed in particular the statement made by the Chilean Christian-Democratic leader Tomic Leighton i Fuentealba, openly condemning anti-democratic practices since the use of armed force, by strangling the democratically expressed popular will could only lead to repression and dictatorship.

THE WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

(Eric BLUMENFELD)

Europe's inability to present a united front on the Middle East war is such that the only realistic thing to call for at this stage is an immediate meeting of the Community Foreign Ministers for the purpose of bringing about as soon as possible a ceasefire and negotiations for a lasting peace.

The resolution passed by the European Parliament, which had been drawn up by agreement amongst all the political groups, ought to have been much more vigorous. However, as it stands, it is an agreed minimum and the Christian-Democratic Group, realizing the impossibility of obtaining agreement on anything more substantial, gives it full support.

However, in proposing to the combatants that hostilities be suspended and negotiations opened immediately, it takes a different line from the statements made by the super-powers (Russia, in particular) and from the overtures made by Egypt and Syria, both of which contain unrealistic proposals.

We look to the Community to offer its services directly as an intermediary in this conflict, which continues to claim new victims and to threaten world peace. The Community must meet its responsibilities to the world: let us bring our political and economic strength into play, independently of the super-powers!

No democrat resolved to defend liberty, human rights and moral principles can fail clearly to condemn the use of violence as a political weapon. The states of the Community have only partially done so. Some day history will show who made the mistakes in this war, but this should not keep us from condemning right now those who launched the hostilities by attacking first. Have the Community countries given any thought to this point?

Furthermore, what has become of the 1972 agreement between Moscow and Washington, recently stressed yet again, to respect the fundamental principles of peace? Not only has no joint action been taken to avert the conflict but it even turns out that the Moscow government has been sending the most modern military equipment to the Egyptians and the Syrians over the past six months. We in Europe must draw our own conclusions.

EUROPEAN POLITICAL UNION

Alfred BERTRAND

In the period of almost 30 years since the end of World War II, no event has been more significant or had more far-reaching consequences than the foundation of the European Community in the years 1951 and 1957.

It was the great political figures of the Christian Democrat Movement who first had the courage to branch out along new paths and to translate their ideas into previously undreamt-of action.

Their plan was regarded by many, not least by the governments of 'non-founder' States, as a utopian idea, doomed to failure like all the other plans for European union worked out in the period between the two wars.

Others, for example, political groups like the German Social Democrats, opposed such plans and rejected accession to the incipient Community on ideological grounds.

It was due to the persuasiveness of the authors of the Treaties, based on an irrefutable analysis of the political situation in the world and especially in Europe, that the idea took root that the Community could develop an active life of its own.

During the first years of the Community's development, the governments, parliaments and peoples of the Member States realized that Europe could survive and work out its own role on the world political scene only if it united in defence of common interests.

The Heads of State or Government have formulated certain objectives for the Community - partly deriving from the existing treaties and partly going beyond these treaties - the most ambitious of which is the realization of a European union covering 'all relations between Member States'.

The Christian Democrat Movement assumes that European union has the same meaning and purpose as the political union which it has constantly advocated.

It will take vigorous effort on the part of Community bodies and political groups, and a wide-ranging exchange of ideas with interested public opinion, to define precisely the nature and extent of the proposed European union. The broad outlines have already been indicated by the Summit Conference, which stressed its resolve 'to base the development of the Community on democracy, freedom of opinion, free movement of people

and ideas and the participation of the peoples through their freely elected representatives'.

In their desire to make human needs the centre of every policy and to make policies serve the welfare of mankind, Christian Democrats will do their utmost to see that internal organization is based on the following main principles:

- the protection of human dignity against the reduction of man to a mere object - even by the state - in economic matters and in scientific research, even in the name of an ideal.
- civil liberty, which in a democratic system must be the freedom of the majority and not of a privileged minority.
- justice, which must be true social justice and not a mere formal proclamation of equal rights.
- preservation of the internal peace of society, which requires the state to maintain a constant balance between the interests of the individual and the interests of the Community.

There is no justification, however, for leaving everything unchanged until 1980 and failing to introduce modifications to the present working procedures of the Community bodies and relations between them.

If, as the Summit Conference promised, the present activity of the Community is to be stepped up and economic and monetary union is to be progressively implemented, extensive modifications and adjustments to the procedures and powers of these bodies will be called for.

Addressing itself, in the first place, to its sister parties all over Europe and after that to public opinion generally, the Christian-Democratic Group in the European Parliament suggests a practical plan for giving the European Community democratic structures and full political powers by 1980 at the very latest, by means of a process which we may reasonably envisage in three stages.

In the first stage, in which no amendments to the Treaties would be called for, it would be necessary and sufficient for the Council of Ministers to adapt itself, at least gradually, to the Treaty's provisions in the matter of voting, that is to say, to majority decisions. The Parliament should begin to exercise greater power to initiate legislation.

In a second stage beginning in 1975, the Treaty should be amended to give really effective powers over the budget and foreign policy to the European Parliament, which should be elected by direct universal suffrage.

Finally, by 1980 there should be an amendment to the Treaty designed to create a true European Government, a European Parliament with all the powers of a democratic Assembly and a Chamber of the States which would safeguard all the legitimate interests of the Member States.

PERMANENT DIALOGUE BETWEEN COUNCIL AND PARLIAMENT

In addressing itself to the problem of the Parliament's budgetary powers, which was also discussed at the October plenary part-session, the Christian-Democratic Group reaffirmed very precisely its own fundamental positions on the future development of the European Community within the framework of the realization of Europe as a political unity. The Christian-Democratic Group sees the Europe of the future as a federal Europe with a bicameral parliamentary institution, that is to say, made up of a 'Chamber of the States' and a Chamber of Representatives.

It is against this background that we must see the speech made by the group's spokesman, Mr AIGNER, at the plenary sitting in Strasbourg on 15 October. After the European Parliament's Political Affairs Committee and the other political groups had given their views on the matter, Mr AIGNER strongly criticised the Commission's proposals. He said that the 'second consideration' procedure, at least in the present institutional situation (that is to say, without a prior strengthening of the European Parliament's powers), was, in fact, devoid of all value. The creation of a genuine balance between the institutions was by now clearly indispensable. Whereas the Council had never assumed the role of a Community institution, it had always been Parliament, and only Parliament, built around multinational political groups, that had shown how a genuine Community institution should appear and operate. The central problem was therefore how to strengthen the position of Parliament, and this could not be done without amending the Treaties. Such an amendment had, in fact, been supported by all the national parliaments when the creation of the Community's own resources was ratified.

It was clear, said Mr AIGNER, that if we spoke of greater budgetary powers for Parliament, we should also be prepared to give it a share in decisions on legislative matters, especially legislation with financial implications, since 90% of budget expenditure stemmed from previously enacted legislative provisions. It was for this reason that the Christian-Democratic Group in the European Parliament felt that Parliament should have the power to approve or reject the draft budget in whole or in part.

The problem must therefore be seen against the background of a renewed Community structure based on the federal idea. On this basis there could be no predominance of either Council or Parliament on legislative matters; there must be joint responsibility and consequently joint decision-

making power for both institutions. This showed again how useful it would be to have a 'conciliation council' in which, in cases of dispute, a dialogue would take place between Council and Parliament. The question of the 'final say' would arise only after this dialogue and within the institutional context already mentioned. Thus the Council could pronounce the final decision, provided it acted in a public sitting and by an absolute majority.

This proposal, said Mr AIGNER, had the advantage of political realism and of giving preference to the idea of bringing Council and Parliament together at the same level in a decision-making dialogue.

ACTIVITIES OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC GROUP MEMBERS

- o Mr SCHULZ acted as rapporteur in a preliminary discussion between the Committee on External Economic Relations and the Commission of the European Communities on the text submitted by the Commission to the Council on guidelines and priority measures relating to a common energy policy and related proposals.
- o Mr GIRARDIN was appointed rapporteur by the Social Affairs Committee to prepare the hearing of both sides of industry on 24 October 1973 concerning the social action programme.
- o Problems of competition, preventive control of mergers and control of undertakings in dominant positions were discussed in Brussels with representatives of two Berlin institutions, the Bundeskartellamt and the Stiftung Warentest.
Mr ARTZINGER was rapporteur.
- o Mr BERTRAND submitted a working document to the Political Affairs Committee on the next steps in the institutional development of the Community towards European Union.
- o Mr KOLLWELTER was rapporteur for the Committee on Regional Policy and Transport on the introduction of a common system of rates to be charged for the use of transport infrastructures.
- o The Committee on Agriculture adopted Mr HEGER's report on a proposal for a regulation on measures to be taken in the agricultural sector following the increase in the central rate of the Dutch florin.
At the same meeting the committee adopted a report by Mr DE KONING on a proposal for a regulation fixing the target price and the intervention price for olive oil for the 1973/74 marketing year.
- o At its meeting of 10 October in Brussels the Committee on Budgets adopted Mr NOTENBOOM's draft report on the annual report on the economic situation of the Community.
- o The Legal Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, under the chairmanship of Mr SCHUIJT, adopted the text of a proposal for a resolution on the formation of political groups in the EP, which was discussed at the November plenary session in Strasbourg.
Mr V. VERNASCHI was rapporteur.

THE MIDDLE-EAST PROBLEM

by Mario SCELBA

Our initial reaction to the latest war, more violent and destructive than ever before, is one of disapproval: yet again the solution to the long-standing conflict between the Arab countries and Israel has been sought in armed force.

Experience shows that, in war, the cost in human lives and resources is not compensated by the advantages of military victory.

What is more, a peace enforced by arms is a fragile one. To disapproval at the recourse to arms must be added reproof of those who could have prevented the conflict but instead consciously or unconsciously aided it by their unrestricted supply of the most modern aggressive weaponry, without concern as to the ability of the recipients to pay or the fact that most of them had far greater need for things other than weapons.

The resumption of hostilities struck all the harder since it came at a time when often spectacular proposals by the major powers, striving to initiate an era of détente and cooperation, were beginning to find acceptance among the people.

Military intervention by the two super-powers on behalf of the two sides thus only accentuates the grave concern already aroused by the conflict itself. It is no longer simply a case of achieving a cease-fire but of laying the genuine foundations for peace: only thus will the guns remain silent for ever.

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The Mediterranean is 'our sea', the European Community's sea. That is why we have an immediate interest in what happens in that sea and in the Near East. One has only to consider the consequences of a cut in oil supplies as the result of the war to understand the dangers to the people of the Community if the conflict should drag on. And this is not the place to consider, even theoretically, the consequences of a military confrontation - be it only indirect - between the superpowers, even if the air lifts, promptly set up to fuel the battle, were to justify fears for the worse. We can only hope that reason and a sense of proportion will prevail among the men who govern the superpowers.

These very concerns led us last year, at a not unpropitious moment, to move for a vote in the European Parliament on a Community initiative for peace in the Middle East.¹ Unfortunately, these fears have been confirmed by present events and in a shorter time than anticipated. We can only deplore the fact that the European Parliament's vote on the resolution of 15 March 1973 was disregarded and that the governments of the Member States have shown themselves incapable of formulating a joint policy for Middle East peace.

A number of factors now support the claim that the European Community is in a better position than others to influence peace in the Middle East with some prospect of success.

The Community has the duty and the interest to make the attempt, because, given the failure of UN mediation and the conflicting interests of the superpowers, it would seem to be the only power whose sole interest is in peace with mutual respect for all nations and in justice, and which can offer disinterested guarantees necessary for the respect of treaties.

The pre-eminent position of the Community in the Mediterranean will enable it to fulfil this role. It will be helped by the prestige it enjoys among the states bordering the Mediterranean and those of the Middle East, the harmony of interests, and the many ties established over the past few years with the belligerent countries themselves. Moreover, calls on the Community to act directly to resolve the conflict are coming from the Mediterranean countries themselves.

But since a Community initiative is now desirable, the Member States will have to recognize that national policies are at present out of place in this area and that the possible sacrifice of individual interests is justified by the risks of a prolongation of the war and the advantages of a peace settlement.

The Summit Conferences in the Hague and Paris emphasized the need to assert the identity of the European Community in international affairs and its duty to exercise a role in world politics. The situation in the Middle East calls for assertion of this identity and the exercise of this duty. The need to work for peace - which the Member States, as members of the Community, must accept - does not require new treaties or institutions; a political will on the part of the governments concerned, together with existing Community instruments, are all that is needed.

¹ See DC Europe No. 1, 1973

The resolution adopted by the European Parliament at its October part-session is intended precisely to encourage the governments of the Member States to assume the responsibilities dictated by the facts of the situation and the seriousness of the interests at stake. These responsibilities also coincide with the objectives of the existing treaties.

The complexity and fluidity of the Middle East situation, and the lack of the lead that could only be provided by an as yet non-existent Community government, do not allow our Parliament to make any suggestion for a solution of the conflict or for the practical form that a Community initiative should take. This will be the task of the eagerly awaited conference.

Inevitably, therefore, our appeal can have no force other than to urge Member States' governments to present a united front and act together to restore peace to this war-torn region so close and so vitally important to us.

We hope to see the European Community and, on its behalf, the Member States working for peace and not merely passive onlookers and inert victims of the consequences of this war.

This does not exclude, but rather implies, support for any initiative that may be taken by other parties to contribute to peace.

If we reflect that two of the five nations with a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council are members of the European Community, we can understand how much greater their influence would be on the Council if they could speak on behalf of the European Community and act in a united fashion.

If dissensions amongst its Member States prevent the European Community from taking any action in an area of which it itself forms a part, what credibility can be given to the repeated communiqués from Summit Meetings concerning the European Community's world role? It is true that the Summit Meetings have envisaged that this role would be assumed only after a considerable period of time. But, in view of the realities of the international situation, we have to demonstrate that these time-limits are too abstract. The situation obliges us to press on towards the speedy achievement of political union and a corresponding assumption of responsibilities in regard to world politics. While awaiting the ratification of treaties, we must push on with pragmatic measures using the existing institutions: Council, Commission and Parliament.

World politics are not bound to the timetable laid down by European summit meetings, and there is always a danger that in the onward rush of events the situation may change in such a way as to make political union impossible at the time placed or at all. This explains the urgent nature of our appeal. A refusal to take any action in the Middle East, apart from any other unfortunate consequences, could prejudice the future union of a democratic Europe within the Community. Unfortunately, the European Parliament does not yet have the power to commit the Council of Ministers, much less the governments of the Member States. But they are well aware that the wishes of Parliament, composed as it is of representatives elected by popular vote, express the anxieties and hopes of the peoples of the Community.

